

and gnashing of teeth.¹¹ Screaming and exclamation, however distressing and sometimes harassing to the operator, affords much greater relief than would any narcotic, which would suppress those outpourings of nature, and give rise to fever. It is as necessary that the body should have its means of expression of grief, as it is that the mind should relieve itself from its sorrows by words, which, if it do not give vent to, becomes overpowered. Of this state Shakspeare, with his characteristic knowledge of man, and of the feelings which agitate him, gives us a delineation in his description of the state of Macduff, who stands stupified on hearing that his wife and children have been savagely butchered, upon which his friend says,—

“What! man! never pull your hat upon your brows;
Give sorrow words; the grief that does not speak,
Whispers the o’erfraught heart, and bids it break.”

To stifle the expression of pain under operations, has, therefore, been avoided. Baron Percy, who has been said to have performed as many great operations as any surgeon known to us, has observed that it is a favourable circumstance when the patient cries and sheds tears. The Baron Larrey has written upon the language of complaint during pain, and the consequence of suppressing it; and you may consult a very well-written essay upon the subject in the second volume of the quarterly series of the *Medico-Chirurgical Review*. Baron Larrey says he has known men who, in the midst of the most terrible suffering, knew not how to cry out, or who could not; they appeared as if stupified, or absorbed by the pain. He has exhorted them, under such circumstances, to cry out, when he saw their necks and chests swell, the hair bristle on their heads, the mouth closed and distorted, all their muscles contracted, the face pale and sunk, the eye fixed and projected, the countenance wild, a hollow stertorous sound issuing from the bottom of the throat, and yet suffering nature giving no vent to her feelings. Some individuals who express little, actually fall victims to the suffering, not to the operation. M. Biot gives us an instance of this kind. He extirpated a large cancer from the breast of a female, who experienced such excruciating pain during the first incision, and the whole of the body was thrown into such a state of rigid contraction, that it required six men to hold her. The surgeon was obliged to stop the operation for two minutes, till the spasmodic action ceased. She then appeared as though she had lost all her energy. She made no complaint during the sequel of the operation. The tumour removed, no hemorrhage succeeded. She was placed in bed, dressing was applied, and she appeared indifferent about every thing, except repose, which she much wished for. She died in a few hours.

Baron Larrey extirpated the breast of a lady affected with cancer, who was of a most religious turn of mind. She held a crucifix in her hand, smiling and talking in the most tranquil and quiet manner during the whole of the operation, while her body was contorted with agony. She was seized immediately afterwards with a universal spasmodic affection, which nearly put an end to her existence. The Marechal de Mury was operated on for stone in the bladder; he prayed devoutly at mass just before the operation, for strength of mind to bear the pain, and he so far suppressed the feelings of nature, that he uttered not a murmur whilst the stone was extracted. He died immediately after.—*Ibid*.

20. *On the administration of Opium to Children.* By G. G. SIMONA, M. D.—Many individuals who have devoted themselves to the treatment of the diseases of infancy and of childhood most strongly object to the use of opium. The principal writers on this subject are Dr. Armsstrong, Dr. Hamilton, Dr. Underwood, Dr. Harris, Dr. Burns, Dr. Clarke, and Mr. North; you will find them, generally speaking, inculcating the greatest caution in the employment of opium, and pointing out the great necessity of care and watchfulness. Very minute doses of the tincture of opium have proved fatal to infants. Dr. Alison, an authority of the highest value, has met with a case in which an infant, a few weeks old, died, with all the symptoms of poisoning by opium, after receiving four drops of laudanum; and he has repeatedly seen unpleasantly deep sleep produced by two drops only. Dr. Christison tells us, “that an infant, three days old, got, by mistake, about the fourth part of a mixture, containing ten drops of laudanum; no medical

inn was called for eleven hours; at that time there was great somnolence and feebleness, but the child could be roused; the breathing being very slow, artificial respiration was resorted to, but without advantage; the child died in 24 hours, the character of the symptoms remaining unchanged to the last." Three drops of laudanum, in chalk mixture, administered for a diarrhœa, to a stout child, fourteen months old, has caused death.

Dr. Clarke observes, "that opium has been exhibited in the forms of laudanum, syrup of white poppies, or under some empirical title, as 'Godfrey's Cordial,' or 'Dalby's Carminative.' These medicines have been ignorantly and indiscriminately given, to some instances under the sanction of medical men, either because they did not themselves know what to do, or to fall in with the desires or prejudices of parents and friends; but the administration of this class of medicines requires the greatest skill in the physician." Nothing is more uncertain than the effects of opium on young subjects, and it ought never to be employed even by medical men, except with the greatest caution, as it sometimes acts with much violence, and has proved deleterious in very small doses: half a drachm of genuine syrup of poppies, and in some instances a few drops of "Dalby's Carminative," have proved fatal in the course of a very few hours to very young children. You will find in a volume very properly designated *Practical Observations on the Convulsions of Infants*, by Mr. North, some very sensible observations upon the administration of sedatives to children; and he very justly observes, "That we are not to deprive ourselves of a powerful weapon, because, in the hands of the unskilful, it may have proved the means of destruction rather than of defence."

To manage the use of opium, or other medicines of the same class, adroitly, either in adults or in children, when it is our object to subdue nervous irritability, is by no means an easy task. There are not many of the diseases to which either infancy or childhood is subject in which you will find this drug at all necessary, and in by far the greater number it is altogether inadmissible; this most probably arises from the great predisposition that exists at that period to arterial acceleration, and to cerebral affection. The only circumstances which imperatively call for its administration are very severe bowel complaints, which can by no other means be controlled, and also those alarming convulsions which occur at this period, and which sometimes threaten immediately to terminate existence; in such instances the necessity for quick relief, and the urgency of the case may demand from us the having recourse to means which may themselves, under ordinary circumstances, be objectionable. We must then administer very minute doses, must take care that if any unfavourable symptoms arise we have the means of checking their progress. The best plan is to begin with a single minim of tincture of opium, and to drop this into at least four drachms of fluid, with one or two drops of the compound tincture of cardamom; the best fluid is peppermint-water; a little magnesia added to this is generally useful. Should any somnolence appear, the oil of peppermint, or aniseed, or the tincture of castor, or of assafoetida, or any of the diffusible stimuli, must be quickly given, and cold must be applied, which is occasionally more serviceable than any medicine, water being freely sprinkled over the head, neck, and face. No doubt many infants fall victims to the injudicious use of quack medicines, many of which, under the name of anodynes and soothing syrups, contain opium; nor is the practitioner, when called in, always informed of the medicines which have been employed.—*Ibid.*

21. *On the administration of Opium per anum.* By G. G. SIGMOND, M. D.—There are circumstances under which it becomes necessary to inject into the anus an opiate, or to use it as a suppository; sometimes the stomach will not bear it, or other times it is thus employed to alleviate the sufferings which arise during diseases of the prostate gland, of the uterus, or of the bladder; and it is necessary for you to bear in mind, that however great the benefit may often be, the practice is not unattended by danger, and that you must be cautious as to the quantity thus employed, and the state of your patient, for it is evident that occasionally the absorption into the system is very rapid, and that from some unexplained causes the action is increased. It is singular enough that in France, where enemata are in very general use, the prejudice is exceedingly strong